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PROGRAM

RELEASE

The Agricultural Review

Wed. Oct. 5 or later

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

ANNOUNCEMENT: Harvest news is featured in today's "Agricultural Situation," released by Station _____. Specialists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture furnish the information for these reviews which Uncle Sam's Radio Service sends out the first week of every month. Wide-awake farmers will find much of value in these talks.

First of all, we want to say that this is the Agricultural Review for September. Nobody would expect anyone but an oracle to predict an October farm situation on October 5. Hard enough, we say, to cover a country as large as the United States even when you look back three or four weeks. We are not patting ourselves on the back, remember-- just making a straight-from-the-shoulder statement.

Anyhow, the harvest is on and the coming month (October) will tell a mighty interesting story. The children are getting into school by now-- the college boys are looking forward to football games-- 'the frost is on the pumpkin', as some poet said-- and the goldenrod's in bloom, but farmers harvesting late crops haven't much time to grow sentimental about the fringed gentians, being so busy digging potatoes and trying to make the hens come through the moult.

As we were saying, before poetry took a hand, the harvest is now on and the coming month will tell a story. The little blue book-- which is the Department of Agriculture's monthly farm situation survey-- says that cotton and fruit are apparently in more moderate supply than last year and returns from these two crops are better. Wheat and potatoes, on the other hand, are somewhat larger crops than in 1926, but their prices are still favorable.

The little blue book forecasts the cotton crop as nearly one-third less than last season's record output. Of course the boll weevil was responsible for some of the decrease. Winter wheat turned out about 75 million bushels less than last year, but still made about an average crop. Spring wheat, however, is more than filling the gap with a harvest of 100 million bushels in excess of the 1926 crop. Both wheat and cotton are moving to market more rapidly than last year. Potatoes look like an average crop, although blight and rot have tended to cut down earlier forecasts. Late fruit is a smaller crop than last year, especially in the East. The blue book says that apple prices are higher and that the western apple districts are doing better than they did in 1926.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

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There's an old saying that a late season makes fodder rather than grain. This season has shown the truth of this very well. The 1927 hay crop was a bumper yield. Oats, however, and corn, relatively speaking, are lighter than last season. Corn Belt farmers, and other farmers as well, know that this is just the critical time for corn. The question is, how much corn will freeze? The warm weather last month did a lot to mature the grain, but recent light frosts have left their mark in the northern valleys. But even if a big frost holds off two or three weeks, a pretty good portion of the corn will still be small eared, soft, wormy, or otherwise of low quality. Those who know, say that the corn country west of the Mississippi has a much better crop than the territory east of the river.

The farmers are naturally concerned with the supply of stock feed. The supply is, of course, closely related to the livestock situation, and the little blue book gives us good news in the statement that the animal industries are, on the whole, in as favorable position at present as they have held for ten years. It's likely that the corn shortage will send some hogs on their way to the market at lighter weights. Furthermore, the corn shortage may restrict, to a certain extent, breeding of spring pigs. It's possible, of course, that there may be more corn that is fit for feeding than now is thought likely.

Out West in the range country, the cattle and sheep are now moving down out of the high ranges and long trainloads of marketable stock are moving eastward. This makes a pleasant picture for the general populace to linger over. The beef cattle industry is without doubt on the upgrade, and that won't be bad news at all for the cattlemen, east or west. Sheep raisers are still doing well and are confident, although those who look beyond the present are cautioning them against over-expansion. The dairy industry is also in good shape.

The advance in cotton, corn, and apple prices has helped to boost the general level of purchasing power of farm products about five points. The little blue book sums it all up by saying that 1927 can probably be called an average year for the South-- a good year in the Northwest wheat belt and a fair year in the Southwest wheat belt-- a fair year in the Western Corn Belt, but a poor year in the Eastern Corn Belt-- and a good year in the Far West range States and the Pacific Northwest.

Now we come to the key regions. Eastern farmers are now busy filling their silos, digging their potatoes, picking their apples and harvesting their late truck crops. Growers in the important potato sections are somewhat disappointed at the fall in potato prices, but are still hopeful that the late crops will bring a fairly good price. The dairy men are confident, saying that their industry is in a strong position for the coming winter.

Down South, the Eastern Cotton Belt suffered somewhat from heat and a dry spell during September. The cotton is maturing under handicaps, the boll weevil, shedding, worms, and root rot being some of those handicaps. Corn and other southern crops are fairly good, except in the sections which were hit by the dry spell. Southern farmers are encouraged by the higher price for cotton, in spite of the poor crop.

10/5/27

They are busy with Fall work in the Corn Belt. Winter wheat is mostly in the ground by now and the corn harvest has started. Corn Belt farmers haven't much hope that late-planted corn will come through well, except to make feed. There will be a real corn crop west of the Mississippi, however, and that will naturally help out. The Corn Belt stockmen are encouraged by the rising price of cattle and hogs, although some of them think cattle are too high to make a good feed risk this winter.

In the Wheat Belt, winter wheat is in the ground in the southern part and sowing is well along in the north. Threshing of spring wheat is making good progress in the North. The combined harvester has probably aided in getting Wheat Belt grain to market very rapidly this season. Corn, potatoes, hay, and other crops in this section are very good. All told, it looks like a good year for the Wheat Belt.

Range country reports are good, except for dry spots in southwestern Wyoming and the neighboring territory. The grass is rather soft and slow to cure in some sections, however. And yet the general picture of feed conditions is unusually good from Montana clear down to the Mexican border. As we said before, the cattle and sheep are coming down from the high ranges and market stock is rolling into the East. General conditions in the range country are favorable.

Now moving North and West, we find that Washington and Oregon suffered from a rainy spell during September, which hurt the grain somewhat and delayed Fall work. They are now harvesting fruit and late crops. There's a fairly good apple crop in the North, which stands to make more money than last year. In California they are now drying prunes and grapes. The production of most of the deciduous fruits is heavy. In Southern California the citrus outlook is promising.

And so winter approaches the farm lands under varying conditions. Prospects are fair to good in some parts; poor in others; and excellent in still others.

U.S.D.A.
F.O.I.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Uncle Sam will release another summary of general farm conditions during the first week in November. This station has arranged to broadcast it.

